

Elon Musk's Twitter Is Pulling Back The Moderation Kimono

twitter.com/mtaibbi/status/1598822959866683394



 **Thread**

  **Matt Taibbi** 
@mtaibbi 

 **1. Thread: THE TWITTER FILES**

5:34 PM · Dec 2, 2022

78.6K Retweets 15.3K Quote Tweets 220.5K Likes

twitter.com/mtaibbi/status/1598824197819666435



 **Thread**

  **Matt Taibbi** 
@mtaibbi 

 **2. What you're about to read is the first installment in a series, based upon thousands of internal documents obtained by sources at Twitter.**

5:39 PM · Dec 2, 2022

11.4K Retweets 421 Quote Tweets 76.5K Likes



Thread



Matt Taibbi ✓
@mtaibbi



3. The “Twitter Files” tell an incredible story from inside one of the world’s largest and most influential social media platforms. It is a Frankensteinian tale of a human-built mechanism grown out the control of its designer.

5:41 PM · Dec 2, 2022

10.6K Retweets 298 Quote Tweets 72.6K Likes



Thread



Matt Taibbi ✓
@mtaibbi



4. Twitter in its conception was a brilliant tool for enabling instant mass communication, making a true real-time global conversation possible for the first time.

5:43 PM · Dec 2, 2022

8,319 Retweets 118 Quote Tweets 62.2K Likes





Thread



Matt Taibbi 
@mtaibbi



5. In an early conception, Twitter more than lived up to its mission statement, giving people “the power to create and share ideas and information instantly, without barriers.”

5:45 PM · Dec 2, 2022

8,037 Retweets 97 Quote Tweets 59.5K Likes



Thread



Matt Taibbi 
@mtaibbi



6. As time progressed, however, the company was slowly forced to add those barriers. Some of the first tools for controlling speech were designed to combat the likes of spam and financial fraudsters.

5:46 PM · Dec 2, 2022

8,497 Retweets 124 Quote Tweets 61.8K Likes





Thread



Matt Taibbi 
@mtaibbi



7. Slowly, over time, Twitter staff and executives began to find more and more uses for these tools. Outsiders began petitioning the company to manipulate speech as well: first a little, then more often, then constantly.

5:47 PM · Dec 2, 2022

11.5K Retweets 461 Quote Tweets 71.5K Likes





Thread



Matt Taibbi ✓

@mtaibbi



8. By 2020, requests from connected actors to delete tweets were routine. One executive would write to another: “More to review from the Biden team.” The reply would come back: “Handled.”

On Sat, Oct 24, 2020 at 5:39 PM

@twitter.com> wrote:

More to review from the Biden team:

<https://twitter.com/jared87983561/status/1320159679700373504>

<https://twitter.com/let3481/status/1320154175481626624>

https://twitter.com/JSJX_2/status/1320152593742614529

<https://twitter.com/ozwenya/status/1320151083692388352>

<https://twitter.com/GuySquiggs/status/1320149308625145856>

Thanks all.

On Sat, Oct 24, 2020 at 8:28 PM

@twitter.com> wrote:

handled these.

5:52 PM · Dec 2, 2022

28.5K Retweets

5,071 Quote Tweets

104.9K Likes



On Sat, Oct 24, 2020 at 5:39 PM

@twitter.com> wrote:

More to review from the Biden team:

<https://twitter.com/jared87983561/status/1320159679700373504>

<https://twitter.com/let3481/status/1320154175481626624>

https://twitter.com/JSJX_2/status/1320152593742614529

<https://twitter.com/ozwenya/status/1320151083692388352>

<https://twitter.com/GuySquiggs/status/1320149308625145856>

Thanks all.

On Sat, Oct 24, 2020 at 8:28 PM

@twitter.com> wrote:

handled these.



Thread



Matt Taibbi 
@mtaibbi



9. Celebrities and unknowns alike could be removed or reviewed at the behest of a political party:

Oct 25, 2020 at 9:58 AM

twitter.com

and the first one under SI... defer to Safety on the high profile second or

Oct 24, 2020 at 6:54 PM

twitter.com> wrote

onal report from DNC.

twitter.com/stephen_liuhuan/status/1320153232006676484

twitter.com/RealJamesWoods/status/1320171179504644098

5:56 PM · Dec 2, 2022

16.9K Retweets 2,000 Quote Tweets 77.9K Likes



On Sun, Oct 25, 2020 at 9:58 AM

twitter.com> wrote:

I grabbed the first one under SI... defer to Safety on the high profile second one

On Sat, Oct 24, 2020 at 6:54 PM

twitter.com> wrote:

An additional report from DNC.

https://twitter.com/stephen_liuhuan/status/1320153232006676484

<https://twitter.com/RealJamesWoods/status/1320171179504644098>

twitter.com/mtaibbi/status/1598828932395978752



Thread



Matt Taibbi
@mtaibbi



10. Both parties had access to these tools. For instance, in 2020, requests from both the Trump White House and the Biden campaign were received and honored. However:

5:58 PM · Dec 2, 2022

9,771 Retweets 1,117 Quote Tweets 58.7K Likes





Thread



Matt Taibbi 
@mtaibbi



11. This system wasn't balanced. It was based on contacts. Because Twitter was and is overwhelmingly staffed by people of one political orientation, there were more channels, more ways to complain, open to the left (well, Democrats) than the right.

[opensecrets.org/orgs/twitter/s...](https://www.opensecrets.org/orgs/twitter/s...)

Contributions by Party of Recipient

Role	Total	Democrats	% to Dems	Republicans	% to Repubs
22	\$185,267	\$165,969	99.73%	\$451	0.27%
20	\$968,749	\$909,431	98.47%	\$14,137	1.53%
18	\$309,394	\$295,722	96.38%	\$11,100	3.62%

6:02 PM · Dec 2, 2022

17.4K Retweets 1,498 Quote Tweets 76.9K Likes



<https://www.opensecrets.org/orgs/twitter/summary?id=D000067113>

Contributions by Party of Recipient ⓘ

Cycle	Total	Democrats	% to Dems	Republicans	% to Repubs
2022	\$185,267	\$165,969	99.73%	\$451	0.27%
2020	\$968,749	\$909,431	98.47%	\$14,137	1.53%
2018	\$309,394	\$295,722	96.38%	\$11,100	3.62%

twitter.com/mtaibbi/status/1598830393360162817



Thread

#



Matt Taibbi ✓
@mtaibbi

...



12. The resulting slant in content moderation decisions is visible in the documents you're about to read. However, it's also the assessment of multiple current and former high-level executives.

6:04 PM · Dec 2, 2022

9,416 Retweets 255 Quote Tweets 60.3K Likes



twitter.com/mtaibbi/status/1598830794558021634



Thread



Matt Taibbi ✓
@mtaibbi



Okay, there was more throat-clearing about the process, but screw it, let's jump forward

6:05 PM · Dec 2, 2022

6,251 Retweets 195 Quote Tweets 52.2K Likes



Thread



Matt Taibbi ✓
@mtaibbi



16. The Twitter Files, Part One: How and Why Twitter Blocked the Hunter Biden Laptop Story

6:06 PM · Dec 2, 2022

12.7K Retweets 812 Quote Tweets 62.1K Likes





Thread



Matt Taibbi

@mtaibbi



17. On October 14, 2020, the New York Post published BIDEN SECRET EMAILS, an expose based on the contents of Hunter Biden's abandoned laptop:



nypost.com

Smoking-gun email reveals how Hunter Biden introduced Ukrainian...

Hunter Biden introduced his father, then-Vice President Joe Biden, to a top executive at a Ukrainian energy firm less than a year before the elder Biden ...

6:07 PM · Dec 2, 2022

16.8K Retweets

652 Quote Tweets

68.3K Likes





Thread



Matt Taibbi
@mtaibbi



18. Twitter took extraordinary steps to suppress the story, removing links and posting warnings that it may be “unsafe.” They even blocked its transmission via direct message, a tool hitherto reserved for extreme cases, e.g. child pornography.

6:08 PM · Dec 2, 2022

17.1K Retweets 1,084 Quote Tweets 75.2K Likes





Thread



Matt Taibbi

@mtaibbi



19. White House spokeswoman Kaleigh McEnany was locked out of her account for tweeting about the story, prompting a furious letter from Trump campaign staffer Mike Hahn, who seethed: “At least pretend to care for the next 20 days.”

om: Mike Hahn <mhahn@donaldtrump.com>

ate: Wed, Oct 14, 2020 at 7:19 PM

ubject: URGENT: Kayleigh McEnany

o: cstrom@twitter.com <cstrom@twitter.com>, Lauren Devoll <ldevoll@twitter.com>, Twitter Government & Politics <gov@twitter.com>

ayleigh McEnany (@KayleighMcEnany) has been locked out from her account for simply talking about the New York Post story.

l she did was cite the story and firsthand reporting that has been reported by other outlets and not disputed by the Biden campaign.

need an answer immediately on when/how she will be unlocked.

also don't appreciate how nobody on this team called me regarding the news that you'll be censoring news articles.

ke I said, at least pretend to care for the next 20 days.

6:09 PM · Dec 2, 2022

16.8K Retweets 803 Quote Tweets 78.6K Likes



From: Mike Hahn <mhahn@donaldtrump.com>

Date: Wed, Oct 14, 2020 at 7:19 PM

Subject: URGENT: Kayleigh McEnany

To: cstrom@twitter.com <cstrom@twitter.com>, Lauren Devoll <ldevoll@twitter.com>, Twitter Government & Politics <gov@twitter.com>

Kayleigh McEnany (@KayleighMcEnany) has been locked out from her account for simply talking about the New York Post story.

All she did was cite the story and firsthand reporting that has been reported by other outlets and not disputed by the Biden campaign.

I need an answer immediately on when/how she will be unlocked.

I also don't appreciate how nobody on this team called me regarding the news that you'll be censoring news articles.

Like I said, at least pretend to care for the next 20 days.



Thread



Matt Taibbi ✓
@mtaibbi



20. This led public policy executive Caroline Strom to send out a polite WTF query. Several employees noted that there was tension between the comms/policy teams, who had little/less control over moderation, and the safety/trust teams:

at 7:24 AM Caroline Strom <cstrom@t
e to take a closer look here?

6:12 PM · Dec 2, 2022

8,763 Retweets 150 Quote Tweets 50.4K Likes



On Thu, Oct 15, 2020 at 7:24 AM Caroline Strom <cstrom@twitter.com> wrote:

Hi team! Are you able to take a closer look here?

Thank you!

twitter.com/mtaibbi/status/1598832691092127744



Thread



Matt Taibbi 
@mtaibbi



21. Strom's note returned the answer that the laptop story had been removed for violation of the company's "hacked materials" policy:

web.archive.org/web/2019071714...

ing out to us.

e user was bounced by Site Integrity for violating our Hacked Materials policy. Add
nts and guidance.

I @elaineongsotto
bal Escalations Team

6:13 PM · Dec 2, 2022

9,599 Retweets 465 Quote Tweets 51.2K Likes



<https://web.archive.org/web/20190717143909/https://help.twitter.com/en/rules-and-policies/hacked-materials>


Hi Caroline,

Thanks for reaching out to us.

Per checking, the user was bounced by Site Integrity for violating our Hacked Materials policy. Adding them here for further insights and guidance.

Thanks,

Elaine Ong Sotto | @elaineongsotto
Ops Analyst, Global Escalations Team

 twitter.com/mtaibbi/status/1598833927405215744



Thread



Matt Taibbi 
@mtaibbi



22. Although several sources recalled hearing about a “general” warning from federal law enforcement that summer about possible foreign hacks, there’s no evidence - that I've seen - of any government involvement in the laptop story. In fact, that might have been the problem...

6:18 PM · Dec 2, 2022

8,528 Retweets 645 Quote Tweets 51.4K Likes





Thread



Matt Taibbi
@mtaibbi



23. The decision was made at the highest levels of the company, but without the knowledge of CEO Jack Dorsey, with former head of legal, policy and trust Vijaya Gadde playing a key role.

6:19 PM · Dec 2, 2022

12.1K Retweets 1,278 Quote Tweets 61K Likes





Thread



Matt Taibbi 
@mtaibbi



24. “They just freelanced it,” is how one former employee characterized the decision. “Hacking was the excuse, but within a few hours, pretty much everyone realized that wasn’t going to hold. But no one had the guts to reverse it.”

6:19 PM · Dec 2, 2022

10.7K Retweets 372 Quote Tweets 58K Likes





Thread



Matt Taibbi

@mtaibbi



25.You can see the confusion in the following lengthy exchange, which ends up including Gadde and former Trust and safety chief Yoel Roth. Comms official Trenton Kennedy writes, “I'm struggling to understand the policy basis for marking this as unsafe”:

1-14 NYPost Hunter Biden Laptop Article - PRIVILEGED AND CONFIDENTIAL

ns continue to investigate the origins of the material included in the reporting.

Kennedy

gglng to understand the policy basis for marking this as unsafe, and I think the best explainability argume externally would be that we're waiting to understand if this story is the result of hacked materials. We'll d questions on this if we don't have some kind of solid reasoning for marking the link unsafe.

Kennedy

el@twitter.com @rsommers@twitter.com @iplunkett@twitter.com @krosborough@twitter.com

rsborough

also mark similar stories as unsafe?

www.foxnews.com/politics/hunter-biden-emails-senate-homeland-security-committee-investigating-har
otop

6:21 PM · Dec 2, 2022

11K Retweets

493 Quote Tweets

54.3K Likes



2020-10-14 NYP Hunter Biden Laptop Article - PRIVILEGED AND CONFIDENTIAL
our teams continue to investigate the origins of the material included in the reporting.

Trenton Kennedy

I'm struggling to understand the policy basis for marking this as unsafe, and I think the best explainability argument for this externally would be that we're waiting to understand if this story is the result of hacked materials. We'll face hard questions on this if we don't have some kind of solid reasoning for marking the link unsafe.


Trenton Kennedy

cc: @yoel@twitter.com @rsommers@twitter.com @iplunkett@twitter.com @krosborough@twitter.com

Katie Rosborough

Will we also mark similar stories as unsafe?

<https://www.foxnews.com/politics/hunter-biden-emails-senate-homeland-security-committee-investigating-hard-drive-laptop>

 twitter.com/mtaibbi/status/1598835411262279680



Thread



Matt Taibbi 
@mtaibbi

...



26. By this point “everyone knew this was fucked,” said one former employee, but the response was essentially to err on the side of... continuing to err.

yoel Roth

the policy basis is hacked materials - though, as discussed, this is an emerging situation where the facts remain unclear. Given the SEVERE risks here and lessons of 2016, we're erring on the side of including a warning and reverting this content from being amplified.

Katie Rosborough

What is the warning that will come up?

yoel Roth

lew

When you click the link, you'll see the generic unsafe URL message (references spam, malware, and violations of the Twitter Rules) - not ideal, but it's the only thing we have

Ben Plunkett

lew

Whatever we do in the comms (this will become a bias claim for Jack pre-hearing immediately), let's make it clear we're proactively but cautiously interpreting this through the lens of our hacked materials policy and allowing the link with a warning and significant reduction of spread.

6:24 PM · Dec 2, 2022

Yoel Roth

The policy basis is hacked materials - though, as discussed, this is an emerging situation where the facts remain unclear. Given the SEVERE risks here and lessons of 2016, we're erring on the side of including a warning and preventing this content from being amplified.

Vijaya Gadde

What is the warning that will come up?

Yoel Roth

New

When you click the link, you'll see the generic unsafe URL message (references spam, malware, and violations of the Twitter Rules) - not ideal, but it's the only thing we have

Ian Plunkett

New

Whatever we do in the comms (this will become a bias claim for Jack pre-hearing immediately), let's make it clear we're proactively but cautiously interpreting this through the lens of our hacked materials policy and allowing the link with a warning and significant reduction of spread.



Thread



Matt Taibbi 
@mtaibbi



27. Former VP of Global Comms Brandon Borrman asks, "Can we truthfully claim that this is part of the policy?"

m that this is part of the policy? i.e. As pa
e limiting visibility of related stories on Tw

6:26 PM · Dec 2, 2022

8,456 Retweets 250 Quote Tweets 47.3K Likes



Brandon Borrman

New

To Ian's point, can we truthfully claim that this is part of the policy? i.e. As part of our approach to addressing potentially hacked materials, we are limiting visibility of related stories on Twitter while our investigation is ongoing.



Thread



Matt Taibbi 
@mtaibbi



28. To which former Deputy General Counsel Jim Baker again seems to advise staying the non-course, because “caution is warranted”:

[CONFIDENTIAL]
that we need more facts to assess whether the materials were hacked or us to assume that they may have been and that caution is warranted. There are some facts that indicate that the materials may have been hacked, while there are others indicating that the computer was either abandoned and/or the owner consented to allow the repair shop to access it for more information.

6:28 PM · Dec 2, 2022

8,222 Retweets 502 Quote Tweets 44.8K Likes



Jim Baker

New

[PRIVILEGED AND CONFIDENTIAL]

I support the conclusion that we need more facts to assess whether the materials were hacked. At this stage, however, it is reasonable for us to assume that they may have been and that caution is warranted. There are some facts that indicate that the materials may have been hacked, while there are others indicating that the computer was either abandoned and/or the owner consented to allow the repair shop to access it for at least some purposes. We simply need more information.



Thread



Matt Taibbi
@mtaibbi



29. A fundamental problem with tech companies and content moderation: many people in charge of speech know/care little about speech, and have to be told the basics by outsiders. To wit:

6:30 PM · Dec 2, 2022

7,916 Retweets 219 Quote Tweets 48.4K Likes





Thread



Matt Taibbi 
@mtaibbi



30. In one humorous exchange on day 1, Democratic congressman Ro Khanna reaches out to Gadde to gently suggest she hop on the phone to talk about the “backlash re speech.” Khanna was the only Democratic official I could find in the files who expressed concern.

4, 2020 at 6:21 PM Ro Khanna <rokhanna1@gmail.com> wrote:
“I’m getting a little bit of backlash on hill re speech. Happy to chat if you’

Phone

6:31 PM · Dec 2, 2022

8,298 Retweets 391 Quote Tweets 45.6K Likes



On Wed, Oct 14, 2020 at 6:21 PM Ro Khanna <rokhanna1@gmail.com> wrote:

Generating huge backlash on hill re speech. Happy to chat if you're up for it.

Best, Ro

Sent from my iPhone



Thread



Matt Taibbi 
@mtaibbi



Gadde replies quickly, immediately diving into the weeds of Twitter policy, unaware Khanna is more worried about the Bill of Rights:

gressman Khanna,
you for reaching out and we appreciate the heads up. We put out a clarifying thread earlier this evening to explain our policy around the posting of private information directly to hacked materials. The press secretary's account was not permanently deleted - we requested that she delete the tweet containing material that is in violation of our policies and her account is restricted until she complies.

happy to jump on the phone if helpful. My team in DC (Jessica and Lauren) are copying and also available to discuss.

s,

6:32 PM · Dec 2, 2022

8,031 Retweets 385 Quote Tweets 43.3K Likes



Hi Congressman Khanna,

Thank you for reaching out and we appreciate the heads up. We put out a clarifying thread of Tweets earlier this evening to explain our policy around the posting of private information and linking directly to hacked materials. The press secretary's account was not permanently suspended - we requested that she delete the tweet containing material that is in violation of our rules and her account is restricted until she complies.

I'd be happy to jump on the phone if helpful. My team in DC (Jessica and Lauren) are copied here and also available to discuss.

Thanks,
Vijaya



Thread



Matt Taibbi 
@mtaibbi



32.Khanna tries to reroute the conversation to the First Amendment, mention of which is generally hard to find in the files:

Ro Khanna to Vijaya Gadde Ro Khanna [rokhanna1@gmail.com Hope you're well Vijaya! But this seems a violation of the 1st Amendment principles. If there is a hack of classified information or other information that could expose a serious war crime and the NYT was to publish it, I think the NYT should have that right. A journalist should not be held accountable for the illegal actions of the source unless they actively aided the hack. [So](#) to restrict the distribution of that material, especially regarding a Presidential candidate, seems not in the keeping of the principles of NYT v Sullivan. I say this as a total Biden partisan and convinced he didn't do anything wrong. But the story now has become more about censorship than relatively innocuous emails and it's become a bigger deal than it would have been.

It also is now leading to serious efforts to curtail section 230 —many of which would have been a mistake.

I believe Twitter itself should curtail what it recommends or puts in trending news, and your policy against QAnon groups is all good. It's a hard balance.

But in the heat of a Presidential campaign, restricting dissemination of newspaper articles (even if NY Post is far right) seems like it will invite more backlash than it will do good.

Please keep this communication between just us and Jack and no need to cc the team or forward to them.

Just wanted to offer my two cents.

6:34 PM · Dec 2, 2022

10.2K Retweets 1,332 Quote Tweets 51.5K Likes



Ro Khanna to Vijaya Gadde Ro Khanna [rokhanna1@gmail.com Hope you're well Vijaya! But this seems a violation of the 1st Amendment principles. If there is a hack of classified information or other information that could expose a serious war crime and the NYT was to publish it, I think the NYT should have that right. A journalist should not be held accountable for the illegal actions of the source unless they actively aided the hack. [So](#) to restrict the distribution of that material, especially regarding a Presidential candidate, seems not in the keeping of the principles of NYT v Sullivan. I say this as a total Biden partisan and convinced he didn't do anything wrong. But the story now has become more about censorship than relatively innocuous emails and it's become a bigger deal than it would have been.

It also is now leading to serious efforts to curtail section 230 —many of which would have been a mistake.

I believe Twitter itself should curtail what it recommends or puts in trending news, and your policy against QAnon groups is all good. It's a hard balance.

But in the heat of a Presidential campaign, restricting dissemination of newspaper articles (even if NY Post is far right) seems like it will invite more backlash than it will do good.

Please keep this communication between just us and Jack and no need to cc the team or forward to them.

Just wanted to offer my two cents.



Thread



Matt Taibbi 
@mtaibbi



33. Within a day, head of Public Policy Lauren Culbertson receives a ghastly letter/report from Carl Szabo of the research firm NetChoice, which had already polled 12 members of congress – 9 Rs and 3 Democrats, from “the House Judiciary Committee to Rep. Judy Chu’s office.”

Carl M. Szabo <cszabo@netchoice.org>

Re: Judy Chu, Oct 15, 2020 at 2:15 PM

Re: Recap of Hill Convos About Biden & "Censorship"

Lauren Culbertson <lculbertson@twitter.com>

Joe DelBianco <sdelbianco@netchoice.org>, Robert Winterton

Robert Winterton <RWinterton@netchoice.org>, Chris Marchese <CMarchese@netchoice.org>

Today, NetChoice’s Chris Marchese met informally with 9 Republican and 3 Democratic staffers to gather intel about FB and Twitter and the NY Post story. The staffers hail from the House Judiciary Committee to Rep. Judy Chu’s office.

6:38 PM · Dec 2, 2022

7,454 Retweets 225 Quote Tweets 41.1K Likes



From: Carl M. Szabo <cszabo@netchoice.org>
Date: Thu, Oct 15, 2020 at 2:15 PM
Subject: Recap of Hill Convos About Biden & "Censorship"
To: Lauren Culbertson <lculbertson@twitter.com>
Cc: Steve DelBianco <sdelbianco@netchoice.org>, Robert Winterton
<RWinterton@netchoice.org>, Chris Marchese <CMarchese@netchoice.org>

Lauren,

Yesterday, NetChoice's Chris Marchese met informally with 9 Republican and 3 Democratic House staffers to gather intel about FB and Twitter and the NY Post story. The staffers hail from the House Judiciary Committee to Rep. Judy Chu's office.



Thread



Matt Taibbi 
@mtaibbi



34.NetChoice lets Twitter know a “blood bath” awaits in upcoming Hill hearings, with members saying it's a "tipping point," complaining tech has “grown so big that they can’t even regulate themselves, so government may need to intervene.”

ican said “this is a tip
is were angry.

6:42 PM · Dec 2, 2022

6,828 Retweets 288 Quote Tweets 35.5K Likes



High level take away - every Republican said “this is a tipping point. It’s just too much.” And both Democrats and the Republicans were angry.



Thread



Matt Taibbi 
@mtaibbi



35.Szabo reports to Twitter that some Hill figures are characterizing the laptop story as “tech’s Access Hollywood moment”:

tuation is, one staffer said: “hide behind.” Others were n

6:43 PM · Dec 2, 2022

6,687 Retweets 242 Quote Tweets 35.6K Likes



When asked just how bad this situation is, one staffer said: “it’s tech’s Access Hollywood moment and it has no Hillary to hide behind.” Others were more blunt: “tech is screwed and rightfully so.”



Thread



Matt Taibbi 
@mtaibbi



36.Twitter files continued:

"THE FIRST AMENDMENT ISN'T ABSOLUTE"

Szabo's letter contains chilling passages relaying Democratic lawmakers' attitudes. They want "more" moderation, and as for the Bill of Rights, it's "not absolute"

ocrats, meanwhile, complained that the companies are inept: They let conservatives water and make the Biden campaign look corrupt even though Biden is innocent. This is to Hillary Clinton's email scandal: she did nothing wrong but because they let the story go, it became a scandal far out of proportion. In their mind, social media does the same thing: it doesn't moderate enough harmful content so when it does, it becomes a story. If the companies moderated more, conservatives would be using social media for disinformation, misinformation, or otherwise.

ocrats were in agreement: social media needs to moderate more because they want to protect democracy and making all "truth" relative. When pushed on how the government should act on that, consistent with the First Amendment, they demurred: "the First Amendment isn't absolute."

6:45 PM · Dec 2, 2022

16.7K Retweets 4,175 Quote Tweets 55.3K Likes



The Democrats, meanwhile, complained that the companies are inept: They let conservatives muddy the water and make the Biden campaign look corrupt even though Biden is innocent. They linked this to Hillary Clinton's email scandal: she did nothing wrong but because the press wouldn't let the story go, it became a scandal far out of proportion. In their mind, social media is doing the same thing: it doesn't moderate enough harmful content so when it does, like it did yesterday, it becomes a story. If the companies moderated more, conservatives wouldn't even think to use social media for disinformation, misinformation, or otherwise.

The Democrats were in agreement: social media needs to moderate more because they're corrupting democracy and making all "truth" relative. When pushed on how the government might insist on that, consistent with the First Amendment, they demurred: "the First Amendment isn't absolute."

End of Matt Taibbi's December 2, 2022 Twitter files tweet.

See full tweet at: <https://twitter.com/mtaibbi/status/1598840927199469569>

Twitter Files peel back the curtain on moderation bias at social media platform

By: Blake Morse December 2, 2022

Elon Musk's Twitter is pulling back the moderation kimono tonight, with the first set of Twitter Files being posted by Matt Taibbi to the social platform.

An amazing subplot of the Twitter/Hunter Biden laptop affair was how much was done without the knowledge of CEO Jack Dorsey, and how long it took for the situation to get "unfucked" (as one ex-employee put it) even after Dorsey jumped in.

While reviewing Gadde's emails, I saw a familiar name - my own. Dorsey sent her a copy of my Substack article blasting the incident

Fwd: With the Hunter Biden Expose, Suppression is a Bigger Scandal Than The Actual Story

Sent: Sat 10/24/2020 11:07:03 PM (UTC)

From: jack [redacted]

To: Vijaya Gadde [vijaya@twitter.com]

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Matt Taibbi** <taibbi@substack.com>

Date: Sat, Oct 24, 2020 at 12:06

Subject: With the Hunter Biden Expose, Suppression is a Bigger Scandal Than The Actual Story

To: <jack@0.pizza>

With the Hunter Biden Expose, Suppression is a Bigger Scandal Than The Actual Story

There are multiple instances in the files of Dorsey intervening to question suspensions and other moderation actions, for accounts across the political spectrum

The problem with the "hacked materials" ruling, several sources said, was that this normally required an official/law enforcement finding of a hack. But such a finding never appears throughout what one executive describes as a "whirlwind" 24-hour, company-wide mess.

Hi Owls,

As you probably are aware, Twitter actioned Tweets yesterday relating to two NY Post articles that were tweeted out that allegedly included pictures and screenshots of emails from a laptop that allegedly belonged to Hunter Biden, Presidential candidate Joe Biden's son. Our teams made the determination that the materials fall under our Hacked Materials Policy, in addition to sharing personal information, so links were actioned. As you may know, this existing policy framework was launched in 2018 to mitigate real-time harm based on hack and leak scenarios coming out of the 2016 election.

Several high-profile accounts, including press outlets, were impacted by this decision and were actioned. Unfortunately, the language that was provided in the product may have created confusion (indicating the links were spam or unsafe.) Consequently, Twitter Safety explained the reasoning here in a thread.

This morning, the NY Post tweeted additional links to stories that contained pictures and screenshots of emails that we also actioned. The teams determined that a Trump campaign Tweet that previously was actioned for containing PPI would not be re-actioned when it was re-tweeted without the PPI blurred.

I know there are questions that you probably have and are also probably getting a lot of incoming from stakeholders - governmental, academic, civil society, etc. The last 24 hours certainly has been a whirlwind with lots of curves and unknowns and we fully expect that the issues surrounding this matter will continue to swirl in the coming days so thank you to everyone for your patience.

It's been a whirlwind 96 hours for me, too. There is much more to come, including answers to questions about issues like shadow-banning, boosting, follower counts, the fate of various individual accounts, and more. These issues are not limited to the political right.

See full article at: <https://www.shacknews.com/article/133342/matt-taibbis-twitter-files-peel-back-the-curtain-on-moderation-bias-at-social-media-platform>